

**REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NASHVILLE
COUNTY OF BERRIEN
JULY 22, 2013
6:00 P.M.**

INVOCATION: Robbie Row

PLEDGE: Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Travis Harper

WELCOME: Mayor Travis Harper

ROLL CALL: Members of the City Council present included Aldermen Eric Gaither, Billy Retterbush, Antonio Carter, Scott Stalnaker, Alderwoman Mellisa Watson, and Mayor Travis Harper.

STAFF PRESENT: Tina Ward, Mandy Luke, Randy Lane, John Reynolds, Peter Schultz, and Henry Yawn,

OTHERS PRESENT: Crissy Staley, Robbie Rowe, Hanson Carter, John Black, Pearlene Daniels, and Evelyn Vinson.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES- Alderman Carter made the motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Alderman Retterbush seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ADOPTIONS OF FORMAL AGENDA- Mayor Harper asked that items 5 and 6 be moved to items 1 and 2 on the formal agenda. Alderman Gaither made the motion to adopt the formal agenda with the changes. The motion was seconded by Alderwoman Watson and the motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Water and Sewer for the Berrien County Chamber- Mayor Harper told the group the request was made during our FY 2013-2014 Budget Hearing to absorb the water and sewer expenses for the Berrien County Chamber which is located at the Old Court House. Council needs to make the decision tonight as to if the City can absorb these charges every month. He suggested the Council place a cap on the amount the City will absorb of \$125.00 per month which will equal \$1,500.00 per year. Mayor Harper told the group the Chamber provides a great deal of service for the City of Nashville and Berrien County. Some of the events the Chamber provides for the City are the Cotton Blossom Roundup, the Harvest Festival, which is hosted by Better Hometown, The Swinging Medallions concert at the Winery, and the Monster Mayhem

event which Crissy is presently working on. Crissy also helps Better Hometown with the late night shopping downtown. She also heads up the Berrien Bucks for Berrien County. Randy Lane reported that last year the City had to put over one hundred thousand dollars into the water fund in order to balance the budget. This year we have transferred eighty eight thousand into the water fund in order for it to balance. The water and sewer fund is not a money making fund and due to the new waste water treatment plant we will have to transfer money every year in order to pay for it. He also asked the Council to consider the employee that was hired recently and promised health insurance but still has not received this benefit yet. Alderman Retterbush told the group he is against the request due to the closing of industry the City will be losing one hundred and twenty five thousand this year from the one plant that is closing down. He commended Crissy and the great job she does at the chamber but the City does not have the extra funds to pay out this year. Alderman Retterbush also pointed out the County has a fifteen million dollar budget where the City has a five million dollar budget, surely the county can find the funds to continue paying the chambers water bill. Alderwoman Watson asked Crissy if the county could pay the bill for the chamber. Crissy stated the county currently pays the bill, but ask the chamber to pay our own water bill due to budget cuts. Alderman Stalnaker stated the list of bills that Crissy presented to the Council at the Budget Hearing not only have the water and sewer amounts but the trash pickup and the gas charges as well. Crissy stated that the utility bill is mailed to the county since they have been responsible for paying it, and I do not see the actual bill. Alderman Stalnaker asked Crissy if she is asking the City to cover everything on the bill or just the water and sewer. Crissy replied, we are requesting the City pay everything on the bill. Mayor Harper stated that this is why we should put a cap on how much the City will cover. Alderman Stalnaker stated he would like to hold off for a few months on helping the chamber with the bill because the City has a lot of unknown expenditures out there and before we can help we need to make sure we have the money available to help. Alderwoman Watson and Alderman Carter both agreed with Alderman Stalnaker and stated the City cannot afford another expense right now. Alderman Carter added the City could not even give their employees raises this year so it would not be fair to give money to the chamber when we could not afford raises this year. No action was taken by the Council on this matter.

2. Back to School Bash at Memorial Park- Randy Lane introduced Robbie Rowe who is the Minister for The Bridge Church which is located on the square. Mr. Rowe wants to hold a back to school bash at Memorial Park because he does not have any place outside the Church to hold the event. Mr. Rowe told the group this event will be ending our Churches vacation bible school which will take place the week before August 3rd. We would like to have some bouncy houses and a waterslide put up at the park for the back to school bash because the Church is surrounded by concrete and pavement. The event will take place August 3rd from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. Randy added the County has told Mr. Rowe that they have no problem with him hold this event at Memorial Park. Alderman Stalnaker advised Mr. Rowe to make sure the County waves their rental fee for the park before he holds the event. Alderman Stalnaker made the motion to allow Mr. Rowe to hold the Back to School Bash at Memorial Park on August 3rd subject to the County waving their rental fee. Alderman Gaither seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Resolution adopting the FY 2013-2014 Budget- Randy told the group this will constitute the reading of the FY 2013-2014 Budget. The total budget for the City of Nashville is \$5,625,116.00. Alderman Stalnaker made the motion to adopt the FY 2013-2014 budget. Alderman Retterbush seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

4. City of Nashville New Employee Handbook – Randy Lane passed out a copy of the New Employee Handbook to the Council for review. He pointed out several changes that were made in the new hand book. On page two a vision statement, a value statement, and a mission statement were added to the new handbook. On page eighteen the maximum personal time one can accrue each calendar year was added. The maximum amount being eighty hours, and any hours over eighty will be forfeited. Also on the same page the number of times one can donate sick time to another employee is one time a year. On page twenty eight the rental of the community center for City employees per calendar year will be the first time is free; the second time will be charged half the total fee for the rental. Page number thirty three the dress code for employees has been detailed a bit more. Page number thirty five under Standard of Conduct, we added S and T which is failure to supervise subordinates and abuse of sick leave. On page thirty nine we changed the time to respond and submit a written appeal to discipline procedures to five days. On page forty one we added City vehicles as one of the places smoking is not permitted. On page forty five under the City of Nashville's internet policy, this policy covers everything in our internet service and what employees can and cannot do while using this service. On page fifty the financial responsibility policy advises the employees to pay their bills on time so no discredit will be on the City. On that same page under vehicle safety, we added no unauthorized personnel shall be driving City vehicles. On page fifty eight we added the travel expense policy which City employees are reimbursed for business related expenses and no mileage will be paid if a City vehicle is available to drive. On page sixty we added the inmate community service policy, which list the action that will not be tolerated while they are performing their duties on City property. We added these policies due to some of the inmates were taking stuff back to the jail. Randy told the group the new handbook has been approved by the City Manager/Finance Director, Mandy Luke and the City Attorney Mitchell Moore. Mitchell did send in a couple of minor changes that need to be made to the handbook. Alderman Stalnaker made the motion to approve the new employee handbook once the few changes are made. Alderman Carter seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Georgia Initiative for Community Housing Training in Rome Georgia- Mayor Harper told the group that September 10th through September 12th will be the last of the training for our group with the Georgia Initiative. Our group will also graduate this time from the program in September. Our group will consist of Randy Lane, Dawn Morrison, Henry Yawn, Paul Stagner, and Mayor Harper. Council needs to approve this request for training in September. Alderman Retterbush made the motion to approve the GICH Training in Rome. Alderman Stalnaker seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Memorandum of Understanding with Georgia DOT for Grass Cutting the State Highways (8.2miles) - Randy Lane told the group the DOT is offering the City a Memorandum of Understanding for (8.2 miles) inside the City limits. We will receive \$2500.00 per mile from

DOT which will equal around \$26,000.00 a year. The City is presently advertising for a part time position for this job. Randy also told the group the Memorandum of Understanding is not ready for signatures but will be and he will have the proper signatures applied once it is complete. Alderman Retterbush asked if the part time employee will have to complete any kind of safety training prior to employment. Randy said he was unsure but will check into the matter. Alderman Stalnaker made the motion to enter into the Memorandum of Understanding with Georgia Department of Transportation. Alderman Gaither seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

7. City Manager's/Finance Director's Report- Randy Lane announced a free training opportunity in Valdosta Wednesday July 31st from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for the Georgia Land Bank Act. Mayor Harper told the group the history of the Georgia Land Bank Act. He said this is where one City can join in with another Municipality or County and accept ownership of certain pieces of property which has no ownership or blighted property that people can't afford clean those properties up sell them and place the money into the land bank so that when another piece of property becomes available the land bank can purchase that piece of property and continue the process. Randy informed the group that the training is free and will be held at the City Hall in Valdosta.

Randy Lane also reported that the City of Nashville has taken over the Toys for Tots program in Berrien County for the last three years. Paul Stagner, Tresa McCluskey and I met in Adel with Lee Sears and she suggested that we form the program like Adel and name it Toys for Berrien Kids which is a 501c3 organization. Mandy and Mitchell are ok with the idea but we need the Council's approval as well as the approval for a new checking account for this program. Alderman Retterbush made the motion to approve the new checking account for Toys for Berrien Kids. Alderwoman Watson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Randy added we are getting out letters to all the Churches in Berrien County in hopes they will be involved. Our goal is to provide enough toys for five hundred children.

8. City Attorney's Report- None

9. Department Head's Report- None

PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC/COUNCIL

Evelyn Vinson from 1012 Beetree, asked the Council to look into cleaning up the dump site across from her residence. The housing authority claims the land belongs to the City but the housing authority tenants are the ones throwing garbage on to the site. Can the City please get this site cleaned up and keep people from using it as a dump site. Alderman Stalnaker asked Randy Lane to contact the housing authority and see about cleaning the property up. Ms. Vinson also told the group about the house beside her residence which is abandoned and she believes people use the house as a hide out. She told the group that her street is mainly made up of elderly widow women and this vacant house needs to be torn down or boarded up to keep people out. Mr. Henry told the group the house Ms. Vinson is referring to has been and still has

a continuing court case on it. Randy Lane told the group according to the City attorney if the City demolishes the house then the City will be responsible for all the loans that several banks have on the house. Mayor Harper told Ms. Vinson that something will be done about the house as soon as we can get it clear.

Pearlene Daniels asked Randy Lane when the work will be done on Beetree Park. Randy told Ms. Daniels that he recently spoke to Mr. Rakestraw who is over this project and he is getting prices to bid out the project right now. So we should be starting anytime now. Mr. Rakestraw wants to make sure we are right on the money because we only have a certain amount from the grant we received for the park. We received twenty five thousand from DNR and we matched it with twenty five so we have \$50,000.00 to work with for the park. Dawn Morrison and I are also speaking to different groups about donating some things for the park.

Hanson Carter asked John Reynolds to explain to the Council why his water bill was so high this month. John told the group somehow on the hand held the sprinkler meter and the water meter was swapped. No sewer should have been charged on the sprinkler meter and Hanson was charged sewer. Hanson told the group that April has made the necessary changes to his account but what he wants to know is why their water bill is still high. Mr. Carter said they have not used the sprinkler system because it has rained almost every day. He said they do not have any leaks and John has confirmed they have no leaks. Randy Lane asked John if the meters are side by side and if they are can they be marked so this human error will not happen again. After some discussion Alderman Retterbush asked John to monitor Mr. Carters meters once a week. Randy Lane told Hanson he will check with April Copeland and make sure everything was credited correctly on his water bill.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Alderman Carter made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:50p.m. Alderman Stalnaker seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Travis Harper

Alderman Eric Gaither

Alderman Mellisa Watson

Alderman Antonio Carter

Alderman Billy Retterbush

Alderman Scott Stalnaker

Alderman Michael Richbourg

ATTEST

Tina Ward, City Clerk